



Briefing Notice

Decommissioning Nuclear Power Plants: What Congress, Federal Agencies and Communities Need to Know

Monday, July 16 2018 | 2 PM – 3:30 PM

Room HC-8, U.S. Capitol Building

Materials and video of the briefing will be available at: www.eesi.org/071618nuclear

The **Environmental and Energy Study Institute** (EESI) invites you to a briefing on the urgent need to safely decommission nuclear power plants, which are increasingly shutting down. The United States is facing a significant wave of nuclear plant closures for which it is unprepared. Most of the existing U.S. reactor fleet will inevitably close over the next two decades, as plants near the end of their operational lifespans. Decommissioning is the process of dismantling the closed plant and securing or removing radioactive waste while lowering the site's residual radioactivity to safer levels. Getting decommissioning right is critical to communities' health and safety, while getting it wrong could pose an existential threat.

Leading scientists, policy experts, NGO advocates, and local elected officials with experience on decommissioning will speak at the briefing. It will cover the impacts of decommissioning, current decommissioning options, waste storage vs. transport, thorny unsolved problems and best practices, financing and liability, a just transition for communities and workers, how communities and states can and can't weigh in on these issues, and how they should inform the fast-changing legislative and regulatory landscape. The briefing agenda is:

- **Bob Musil (moderator)**, President and CEO of the Rachel Carson Council; former Executive Director, Physicians for Social Responsibility
- **Robert Alvarez**, Senior Scholar, Institute for Policy Studies; former Department of Energy Senior Policy Advisor to the Secretary and Deputy Assistant Secretary for National Security and the Environment
- **Kevin Kamps**, Radioactive Waste Specialist, Beyond Nuclear
- **Mayor Al Hill**, of Zion, Illinois, home of the decommissioned Zion Nuclear Power Station
- **Ian Zabarte**, Secretary, Native Community Action Council
- **Jackson Hinkle**, Youth Activist, San Clemente High School
- **Geoffrey H. Fettus**, Senior Attorney for Energy & Transportation, Natural Resources Defense Council

More than 80 reactor communities, as well as countless communities along proposed radioactive waste transport routes in 75 percent of Congressional districts, will be profoundly affected by how decommissioning is handled. The potential for radiological contamination, accidents, and long-term environmental, public health and economic damage increases as plants are dismantled and radioactive materials are handled, moved and stored. Reactor communities risk becoming de facto stewards of stranded high-level nuclear waste, which poses local and regional threats. Yet, in most cases, shipping the waste can pose even greater threats. Communities will have to deal with the economic impacts of the legacy of reactor sites that can never be fully decontaminated.

The existing regulatory and legislative framework around decommissioning nuclear plants is insufficient to handle these issues, and in any case it is changing rapidly as Congress considers pending legislation (HR 3053 is just one example) and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission drafts new rules that will govern decommissioning and spent fuel disposition. The experts addressing this briefing have learned surprising lessons about decommissioning that Washington needs to hear as it makes key decisions the consequences of which we will live with for a long time to come.

This briefing has been made possible by generous support from the Jack & Belle Alpern Fund, Beyond Nuclear, Ecological Options Network, Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Pat Marida, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Nuclear Energy Information Service (NEIS), Nuclear Resource and Information Service (NIRS), Riverkeeper, Safe Energy Rights Group, SLO Mothers for Peace and other supporters. Many public interest groups and concerned citizens contributed time and expertise to help organize it.

This event is free and open to the public. Contact Amaury Laporte at alaporte@eesi.org, (202) 662-1884

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Decommissioning Nuclear Power Plants

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Speaker Bios



Robert Alvarez is a Senior Scholar at the Institute for Policy Studies in Washington, D.C., where he focuses on nuclear disarmament and environmental and energy policies. Between 1993 and 1999, Mr. Alvarez served as senior policy adviser to the U.S. Energy Department's secretary and deputy assistant secretary for national security and the environment. During his tenure, he led teams in North Korea to establish control of nuclear weapons materials. Before joining the Energy Department, Mr. Alvarez served for five years as a senior investigator for the U.S. Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, chaired by Sen. John Glenn, and as one of the Senate's primary staff experts on the U.S. nuclear weapons program. In 1975, Mr. Alvarez helped found and direct the Environmental Policy Institute, a national public interest organization. Mr. Alvarez has published many articles and has been featured extensively in the media.



Geoffrey H. Fettus is Senior Attorney for the Energy & Transportation program of the Natural Resources Defense Council. Mr. Fettus, based in Washington, D.C., both litigates and testifies before Congress, focusing primarily on issues relating to the beginning and end of the nuclear fuel cycle. Key cases include the "Waste Confidence" victory over the Nuclear Regulatory Commission in the United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit and the successful challenge to the Environmental Protection Agency's radiation protection standards for the proposed Yucca Mountain nuclear waste repository. Prior to joining NRDC in 2001, Geoff was a Staff Attorney at the New Mexico Environmental Law Center and an Assistant Attorney General in New Mexico's Office of the Attorney General, Environmental Enforcement Division.



Al Hill has been the Mayor of Zion, Illinois, since 2015. The Zion Nuclear Power Station closed in 1998, devastating the town's economy to this day. About 1,000 tons of nuclear fuel rods are stored there in canisters along Illinois' lakefront shoreline. Before being elected mayor, Mayor Hill served on the Zion City Council and as Zion's Commissioner of Building, Public Property, and Zoning as well as the Director of Parks and Recreation. He also served, for five years, as Director of Parks, Recreation, Forestry, and Telecommunications in Stevens Point, Wisconsin beginning in 1981.



Jackson Hinkle is a youth activist who has recently graduated from San Clemente High School. He is a member of San Clemente Green, the Regional Youth Director of Earth Guardians, and the founder of the Team Zissou Environmental Organization. In 2017, Jackson organized a youth-led campaign in his school district which led to the removal of plastic water bottles from over 60 campuses. Jackson is also the founder of Orange County Students For City Council; a coalition that is currently recruiting, mobilizing, and supporting progressive students to run for city council positions.



Kevin Kamps has served as a Beyond Nuclear's Radioactive Waste Specialist since 2007, and previously served at Nuclear Information and Resource Service. He has also been a board member of Don't Waste Michigan since 1993 and has long served on the Great Lakes Nuclear-Free/Green Energy Task Force, including watch-dogging Entergy's Big Rock Point site and Palisades atomic reactor, writing about decommissioning, and advocating for a just transition. Kamps' focus has been community organizing to prevent radioactive waste generation; blocking environmentally unjust, scientifically unsuitable, and non-consent based dump-sites, and their associated high-level radioactive waste transport risks; and promoting Hardened On-Site Storage, as close as possible, as safely as possible, to the point of origin, as a necessary interim measure.



Dr. Robert K. Musil, PhD, MPH, is the President and CEO of the Rachel Carson Council, the legacy environmental organization envisioned by Rachel Carson and founded in 1965 by her closest friends and colleagues. From 1992-2006, Dr. Musil was the longest-serving Executive Director and CEO of Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), winner of the 1985 Nobel Prize for Peace. Dr. Musil has been the producer of numerous ground-breaking independent video documentaries and public radio documentary series including "Shadows of the Nuclear Age: American Culture and the Bomb." Dr. Musil is on the Board of Directors of Beyond Nuclear and on the Advisory Board of EESI. He also serves as President of the Herbert R. Scoville Peace Fellowship, Chairman of the Board of the Council for a Livable World and Chairman of the Board of the Population Connection Action Fund.



Ian Zabarte is Principal Man of the Western Bands of the Shoshone Nation of Indians and Secretary of the Native Community Action Council, a "party with standing" in the NRC Docket No. 63-001 Yucca Mountain. Mr. Zabarte is a downwinder and participated in the creation of the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990. He has studied the health of the Shoshone people from radioactive fallout from 1000 nuclear weapons tested between 1951-1994--health disparities that are the basis for a NEPA contention that Yucca Mountain radiation protections standards are not protective of Native Americans. Mr. Zabarte was appointed to the NRC Licensing Support Network Advisory Review Board in 2018. He is a 2001 graduate of University of Nevada Las Vegas.